

GS SCORE

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PIB Compilation

1. Golden Globe Race # GGR 2018

(Topic: International Relations, General studies-II)

Context:

- ▶ The **2018 Golden Globe Race** is a sailing race around the world which started on 1 July 2018 from **Les Sables-d'Olonne, France**. The race started **fifty years after the Sunday Times Golden Globe Race** and features yachts similar to those used at that time, with no modern technology allowed.

About Golden Globe race:

- ▶ Entrants are limited to sailing similar yachts and equipment to what was available to Sir Robin Knox-Johnston in the original race in 1968–69. That means sailing without modern technology or benefit of satellite based navigation aids. Competitors could apply to have their class of boat approved, providing it was in accordance with the rules.
- ▶ There are 18 entrants from 13 different countries who entered the race. Of those, six have chosen the class compliant but relatively modern Rustler 36
- ▶ **Commander Abhilash Tomy KC** of the Indian Navy, representing India in the Golden Globe Race 2018(GGR) on an indigenously built sailing vessel 'Thuriya' was dismasted and suffered a back injury.

(Practice question)

◦ **With reference to Golden Globe Race # GGR 2018, consider the following statements:**

1. The 2018 Golden Globe Race is a sailing race around the world started on July 2018 from Les Sables-d'Olonne, France.
2. Entrants are required to do sailing without modern technology or benefit of satellite based navigation aids.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a). 1 only
- (b). 2 only
- (c). Both 1 and 2
- (d). neither 1 nor 2

▶ **Correct Option: (c)**

3. Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 2018 Golden Globe Race is a sailing race around the world which started on 1 July 2018 from Les Sables-d'Olonne, France. The race started fifty years after the Sunday Times Golden Globe Race and features yachts similar to those used at that time, with no modern technology allowed.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Entrants are limited to sailing similar yachts and equipment to what was available to Sir Robin Knox-Johnston in the original race in 1968–69. That **means sailing without modern technology or benefit of satellite based navigation aids**. Competitors could

apply to have their class of boat approved, providing it was in accordance with the rules.

- There are 18 entrants from 13 different countries who entered the race. Of those, six have chosen the class compliant but relatively modern Rustler 36
- **Commander Abhilash Tomy KC** of the Indian Navy, representing India in the Golden Globe Race 2018(GGR) on an indigenously built sailing vessel 'Thuriya' was dismasted and suffered a back injury.

2. Ayushman Bharat launched

(Topic: Health, General studies-II)

Context:

- ▶ The second flagship programme under Ayushman Bharat is National Health Protection Scheme, which will cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage upto 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

Objective of the scheme:

- ▶ The focus is on both "Affordable Healthcare" and "Preventive Healthcare."
- ▶ The launch has been done with a vision to provide the poorest of the poor, and the underprivileged sections of society, with better healthcare and treatment.

The initiatives are as follows:

▶ Health and Wellness Centre

- The National Health Policy, 2017 has envisioned Health and Wellness Centres as the foundation of India's health system. Under this 1.5 lakh centres will bring health care system closer to the homes of people.
- These centres will provide comprehensive health care, including for non-communicable diseases and maternal and child health services.
- These centres will also provide free essential drugs and diagnostic services.
- The Budget has allocated Rs 1200 crore for this flagship programme.
- Contribution of private sector through CSR and philanthropic institutions in adopting these centres is also envisaged.

▶ National Health Protection Scheme:

- This will be the world's largest government funded health care programme.

Major impact of this scheme:

- ▶ Ayushman Bharat - National Health Protection Mission will have major impact on **reduction of Out of Pocket (OOP) expenditure** on ground of:
 - ▶ Increased benefit cover to nearly **40% of the population**, (the poorest & the vulnerable)
 - ▶ Covering almost all **secondary and many tertiary hospitalizations. (except a negative list)**
 - ▶ Coverage of 5 lakh for each family, (no restriction of family size)
 - ▶ This will lead to increased access to quality health and medication. In addition, the unmet needs of the population which remained hidden due to lack of financial resources will be catered to. This will lead to timely treatments, improvements in health outcomes, patient satisfaction, improvement in productivity and efficiency, job creation thus leading to improvement in quality of life.
- ▶ The number of beneficiaries of this scheme is roughly equal to the population of the European Union, or the population of America, Canada and Mexico, taken together.

- ▶ It would cover 1300 illnesses, including serious illnesses such as cancer and heart diseases. The private hospitals too would be part of this scheme.

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM):

- ▶ **National Health Mission (NHM)** was launched by the government of India in 2013 subsuming the National Rural Health Mission and National Urban Health Mission. It was further extended in March 2018, to continue till March 2020.
- ▶ The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), now under National Health Mission is an initiative undertaken by the government of India to address the health needs of under-served rural areas.

(Practice Question)

◦ **Which of the following statement regarding 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme is correct?**

- It provides the poorest of the poor, and the underprivileged sections of society, middle class with better healthcare and treatment.
- It promotes financial inclusion in the country.
- It promotes women's Self-Help Groups in backward areas
- it provides coverage upto 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

▶ **Correct Option: (d)**

Explanation:

- Option (a) is incorrect: The launch has been done with a vision to provide the poorest of the poor, and the underprivileged sections of society (not middle class) with better healthcare and treatment.
- Option (b) is incorrect: The focus is on both "Affordable Healthcare" and "Preventive Healthcare."
- Option (c) is incorrect: provide comprehensive health care, including for non-communicable diseases and maternal and child health services
- Option (d) is correct: The second flagship programme under Ayushman Bharat is National Health Protection Scheme, which will cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage upto 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

3. International Day of Sign Languages'

(Topic: Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General studies -II)

Context:

- ▶ International Day of sign languages (IDSL) is celebrated annually across the world on 23rd September every year with international week of the deaf (IWD). This day aims to raise awareness of the importance of sign language in the full realisation of human rights of people who are deaf.

Theme objective:

'With Sign Language, Everyone is Included!' observes the following collective goals of the IDSL and IWD:

- ▶ Reach out to and influence as many governments as possible to legally fulfil their obligations.
- ▶ Promotes deaf people as unique in having both perspectives of disability and linguistic minority and that sign language and deaf culture strengthens multilingualism and are means of promoting, protecting and

preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally.

- ▶ Reflects the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in its recognition of sign languages as equal to spoken languages. Sign languages are fully-fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from spoken languages, alongside which they coexist.
- ▶ Emphasises sign language as a critical prerequisite to the full realisation of human rights for deaf people. Early access to sign language and services in sign language, including quality education available in sign language, is vital to the growth and development of the deaf individual and critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.
- ▶ Stresses that when working with Deaf Communities, the principle of “nothing about us without us” must be considered and integrated.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- ▶ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.
- ▶ Parties to the Convention are required to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law.
- ▶ The Convention has served as the major catalyst in the global movement from viewing persons with disabilities as objects of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing them as full and equal members of society, with human rights. It is also the only UN human rights instrument with an explicit sustainable development dimension. The Convention was the first human rights treaty of the twenty-first century.

(Practice question)

◉ Consider the following statements:

1. International Day of sign languages (IDSL) is celebrated annually across the world on 23rd September every year with international week of the deaf (IWD).
2. International Day of Sign Languages reflects the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in its recognition of sign languages as equal to spoken languages.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a). 1 only
- (b). 2 only
- (c). both 1 and 2
- (d). Neither 1 nor 2

▶ Correct Option: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** International Day of sign languages (IDSL) is celebrated annually across the world on 23rd September every year with international week of the deaf (IWD). This day aims to raise awareness of the importance of sign language in the full realisation of human rights of people who are deaf.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Reflects the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in its recognition of sign languages as equal to spoken languages. Sign languages are fully-fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from spoken languages, alongside which they coexist.
- It emphasises sign language as a critical prerequisite to the **full realisation of human rights for deaf people**. Early access to sign language and services in sign language, including quality education

available in sign language, is vital to the growth and development of the deaf individual and critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.

4. Indo-Kazakhstan Joint exercise 'kazind 2018'

(Topic: Security, International Relations, General studies-II &III)

Context:

- ▶ Indian Army and Kazakhstan Army completed the third edition of their joint military Exercise KAZIND 2018 in Otar Military area, Kazakhstan in a significant step towards fostering military and diplomatic ties between the two countries.

What was focus of the exercise?

- ▶ The primary focus of the exercise was to train and equip the contingents to undertake joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in urban and rural environment under mandate of United Nations
- ▶ The contingents honed their tactical and technical skills in a wide spectrum of counter insurgency operations including joint training on weapons and equipment, cross training exercises, field training exercises and handling of improvised explosive devices.
- ▶ Both sides jointly planned and executed a series of well-developed tactical operations based on scenarios that are likely to be encountered in rural and urban environment.
- ▶ Commanders at various levels from both sides were exercised to work in close coordination to receive and collate information, jointly plan operations and issue suitable order to respective components. Subject experts from both the contingents also held in-depth discussions on various facets of counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations.
- ▶ The exercise provided an ideal platform for both contingents to share their operational experience and expertise while also being instrumental in broadening the interoperability and cooperation between the armies of India and Kazakhstan.

(Practice question)

◦ Consider the following statements:

1. 'Kazind 2018' is a joint military exercise between India, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.
2. The primary focus of the exercise was to train and equip the contingents to undertake joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

- (a). 1 only
- (b). 2 only
- (c). Both 1 and 2
- (d). neither 1 nor 2

▶ Correct Option: (b)

Explanation:

About 'Kazind 2018'

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Indian Army and Kazakhstan Army completed the third edition of their **joint military Exercise KAZIND 2018 in Otar Military area, Kazakhstan** in a significant step towards **fostering military and diplomatic ties** between the two countries.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The primary focus of the exercise was to train and equip the contingents

to undertake **joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations** in urban and rural environment under mandate of United Nations

- The contingents honed their tactical and technical skills in a wide spectrum of counter insurgency operations including joint training on weapons and equipment, cross training exercises, field training exercises and **handling of improvised explosive devices**.

5. Cabinet approves National Digital Communications Policy-2018

(Topic: e-governance, General studies -II)

Context:

- ▶ The central government has approved the National Digital Communications Policy-2018 (NDCP-2018) and re-designation of the Telecom Commission as the "Digital Communications Commission".
- ▶ Impact:
- ▶ The NDCP-2018 envisions supporting India's transition to a digitally empowered economy and society by fulfilling the information and communications needs of citizens and enterprises by establishment of a ubiquitous, resilient and affordable digital communications infrastructure and services.
- ▶ The 'Customer focused' and 'application driven' NDCP-2018 shall lead to new ideas and innovations, after the launch of advanced technology such as 5G, IOT, M2M, etc. which shall govern the telecom sector of India.

Objectives:

The key objectives of the policy are: Broadband for all;

- ▶ Creating four million additional jobs in the Digital Communications sector;
- ▶ Enhancing the contribution of the Digital Communications sector to 8% of India's GDP from ~ 6% in 2017;
- ▶ Propelling India to the Top 50 Nations in the ICT Development Index of ITU from 134 in 2017;
- ▶ Enhancing India's contribution to Global Value Chains; and
- ▶ Ensuring Digital Sovereignty.

Features:

The policy aims to

- ▶ Provide universal **broadband connectivity at 50 Mbps to every citizen;**
- ▶ Provide **1 Gbps connectivity to all Gram Panchayats by 2020** and **10 Gbps by 2022;**
- ▶ Ensure **connectivity to all uncovered areas;**
- ▶ **Attract investments of USD 100 billion** in the Digital Communications Sector;
- ▶ **Train one million manpower** for building New Age Skill;
- ▶ Expand **IoT ecosystem to 5 billion connected devices;**
- ▶ Establish a **comprehensive data protection regime** for digital communications that **safeguards the privacy, autonomy and choice of individuals**
- ▶ Facilitate India's effective **participation in the global digital economy;**
- ▶ **Enforce accountability** through appropriate **institutional mechanisms** to assure citizens of safe and
- ▶ **Secure digital communications infrastructure and services.**

Digital India Initiative:

- ▶ Digital India is a campaign launched by the Government of India on **1 July 2015** to ensure the Government's services are made available to citizens electronically by **improved online infrastructure** and by **increasing Internet** connectivity or by **making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology**.
- ▶ The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with **high-speed internet networks**. Digital India consists of three core components, **(a) development of secure and stable digital infrastructure, (b) delivering government services digitally, and (c) universal digital literacy**.
- ▶ The vision of Digital India programme is inclusive growth in areas of electronic services, products, manufacturing and job opportunities etc. and it is centred on three key areas – Digital Infrastructure as a **Utility to Every Citizen, Governance & Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens**

6. Agmark online system is being implemented across the country to conduct quality control functions

(Topic: Agriculture, e-governance, General studies -III)

Context:

- ▶ The Agmark online system is being implemented across the country to conduct quality control functions.

About Agmark online system:

- ▶ Through the Agmark online system, certificate of authorisation (domestic), permission of printing press, permission of laboratories (domestic) and services related to laboratory information management system will be provided online.
- ▶ The Agmark online system is being implemented across the country to conduct quality control functions.
- ▶ It will assist in realising the Digital India dream and following its footsteps, the application processes related to Agmark certification are being done online by the Directorate of Marketing & Inspection (DMI).
- ▶ The process of application will be simple, quick, transparent and 24x7.
- ▶ The existing procedures for Agmark certification were in physical form and time consuming. The use of modern technologies by the National Informatics Centre has made these processes easy, reliable and cost effective by providing online electronic mode.
- ▶ In the new online application system, there are provisions for online receipt of fees from the applicants. Payment will be received in digital mode through bharatkosh.gov.in website.

AGMARK

- ▶ AGMARK is a **certification mark** employed **on agricultural products in India**, assuring that they conform to a set of standards approved by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection under Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare an agency of the Government of India.
- ▶ The AGMARK Head Office at Faridabad (Haryana) is legally enforced in India by the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act of 1937 (and amended in 1986).
- ▶ The present AGMARK standards cover quality guidelines for 222 different commodities spanning a variety of pulses, cereals, essential oils, vegetable oils, fruits and vegetables and semi-processed products like vermicelli.
- ▶ The Agmark certification is employed through fully state-owned Agmark laboratories located across the nation which act as testing and certifying centres.

(Practice question)

◦ **With reference to Agmark online system, consider the following statements:**

1. The Agmark online system is being implemented across India to ensure the digitalisation of warehouses.
2. The application processes related to Agmark certification are being done online by the Directorate of Marketing & Inspection (DMI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a). 1 only
- (b). 2 only
- (c). Both 1 and 2
- (d). neither 1 nor 2

► **Correct Option: (b)**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Agmark online system is being implemented across the country **to conduct quality control functions(not to ensure the digitalisation of warehouses)**
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It will assist in realising the **Digital India dream** and following its footsteps, the application processes related to Agmark certification are being done online by the **Directorate of Marketing & Inspection (DMI)**.
- The existing procedures for **Agmark certification** were in physical form and time consuming. The use of modern technologies by the **National Informatics Centre** has made these processes easy, reliable and cost effective by providing online electronic mode.

PIB Compilation

1. Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR)

(Topic: Health, General studies-II)

Context:

- ▶ Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR) in Sehore district, Bhopal

Benefit:

- ▶ NIMHR will be the first of its kind in the country in the area of mental health rehabilitation. It will serve as an institution of excellence for capacity building in human resource and research in the area of mental health rehabilitation.
- ▶ It will also serve as a recommending body for suggesting models/protocols for effective rehabilitation of persons with mental illness.

Aims:

- ▶ Prevention and treatment of mental and neurological disorders and their associated disabilities.
- ▶ Use of mental health technology to improve general health services.
- ▶ Application of mental health principles in total national development to improve quality of life.

National Mental health Programme:

- ▶ To address the huge burden of mental disorders and shortage of qualified professionals in the field of mental health, Government of India has been implementing National Mental Health Program (NMHP) since 1982.
- ▶ To ensure the availability and accessibility of minimum mental healthcare for all in the foreseeable future;
- ▶ To encourage the application of mental health knowledge in general healthcare and in social development;
- ▶ To promote community participation in the mental health service development; and
- ▶ To enhance human resource in mental health sub-specialties

2. Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics and DigiVaarta launched.

(Topic: e-governance, financial inclusion, General studies-II)

Context:

- ▶ National Informatics Centre (NIC) and National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI) have jointly set up a Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics (CEDA) to support Government departments to

unlock the hidden potential of the data that they are generating as part of the governance processes and use it to improve the overall governance.

- ▶ DigiVaarta is a platform (both SMS and app) designed to enable Financial and Social Inclusion by educating citizens on various schemes and programmes and hence spread digital payments awareness.

About Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics (CEDA):

- ▶ Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics (CEDA) is being set up with the sole vision of kick-starting and fast-tracking the adoption of advanced analytic and machine learning capabilities by making the Centre the locus of expertise and excellence in the field of Data Analytics. The centre shall provide quality data analytic services to government departments at all levels by identifying appropriate tools and technologies and deploying people with right expertise.
- ▶ Through its focused efforts, the centre aims to provide data analytics services to the government and help in solving complex policy issues through data-driven decision making so as to ensure effective formulation and implementation of various development initiatives that will ultimately benefit the citizens.
- ▶ CEDA proposes to establish strong partnerships with academia and industry to ensure that the cutting edge technologies and quality expertise are brought in to help the Government take advantage of the booming analytic wave. The centre also proposes to build tools and technologies, in collaboration with academia and industry, which will provide quality tools at a much lower cost to the government.

As part of its service offerings, it will help the departments:

- ▶ Understand their business requirements and define their analytic needs
- ▶ Identify the data sets that are required to meet the analytic needs
- ▶ Determine access to the relevant data sources (both within as well as outside the government)
- ▶ Build the required data analytic solutions
- ▶ In integrating departmental data silos and deliver an integrated whole-of government analytics for an integrated policy formulation.

About DigiVaarta:

- ▶ DigiVAARTA is a welcome addition to the government's drive to promote adoption and awareness on digital payments. An effective multi-channel citizen engagement programme that can run on both feature phone and smart phone users, DigiVAARTA is an easy way to.
- ▶ To educate citizens on the use of digital tools for banking and payments.
- ▶ The initial phase of DIGIVAARTA will help and promote learning in digital payments and empower users to draw content on topics as per their choice. DIGIVAARTA will initially be in Hindi and English languages and will engage with users through multiple channels – over Mobile App, SMS and OBD

The National Informatics Centre (NIC; Rashtriya Suchna Vigyan Kendra)

- ▶ It is the premier science and technology organisation of the Government of India in informatics services and information and communication technology (ICT) applications. It is part of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's Department of Electronics & Information Technology. The NIC was established in 1976.
- ▶ It plays a pivotal role in steering e-governance applications in the governmental departments at national, state and district levels, enabling the improvement in, and a wider transparency of, government services. Almost all Indian-government websites are developed and managed by NIC.

(Practice question)

- **Consider the following statements regarding 'DigiVaarta':**

1. It is an initiative to educate citizens on the use of digital tools for banking and payments.
2. It is an online movement to raise the awareness about the climate change and the need to promote clean energy.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

► **Correct Option: (a)**

Explanation:

About DigiVarta

- Statement 1 is correct: To educate citizens on the use of digital tools for banking and payments.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: DigiVAARTA is a welcome addition to the government's drive to promote adoption and awareness on digital payments. An effective multi-channel citizen engagement programme that can run on both feature phone and smart phone users, DigiVAARTA is an easy way to.
- The initial phase of DIGIVAARTA will help and promote learning in digital payments and empower users to draw content on topics as per their choice. DIGIVAARTA will initially be in Hindi and English languages and will engage with users through multiple channels – over Mobile App, SMS and OBD

3. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra inaugurated

(Topic: skill development, General studies-III)

Context:

- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra is Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship's initiative towards creation of standardized infrastructure for delivery of skill training which are equipped to run industry-driven courses of high quality with focus on employability and create an aspirational value for skill development training.

About Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra

- This centre will deliver skills development courses in five job roles like organic grower, plumber, sewing machine operator, and home health aide and electrician domestic solutions. It aims to train 1000 candidates annually.
- The objective behind Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras is to empower the youth by providing market relevant skill training and develop entrepreneurship

The model training centres envisage to:

- Create benchmark institutions that demonstrate aspirational value for competency-based skill development training.
- Focus on elements of quality, sustainability and connection with stakeholders in skills delivery process.
- Transform from a Mandate-driven footloose model to a sustainable institutional model.

National Skill Development Mission:

- ▶ The National Skill Development Mission was launched on 15.07.2015 on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day.
- ▶ The Mission has been developed to create convergence across sectors and States in terms of skill training activities. Further, to achieve the vision of 'Skilled India', the National Skill Development Mission would not only consolidate and coordinate skilling efforts, but also expedite decision making across sectors to achieve skilling at scale with speed and standards.
- ▶ It will be implemented through a streamlined institutional mechanism driven by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
- ▶ Seven sub-missions have been proposed initially to act as building blocks for achieving overall objectives of the Mission. They are: (i) Institutional Training, (ii) Infrastructure, (iii) Convergence, (iv) Trainers, (v) Overseas Employment, (vi) Sustainable Livelihoods, (vii) Leveraging Public Infrastructure.

(Practice question)

◉ Consider the following statements:

1. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras is an initiative of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship towards creation of standardized infrastructure for delivery of skill training.
2. The objective behind Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras is to empower the youth by providing market relevant skill training and develop entrepreneurship.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

▶ Correct statement: (c)

Explanation;

About the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras

- Both statements are correct: Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra is Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship's initiative towards creation of standardized infrastructure for delivery of skill training which are equipped to run industry-driven courses of high quality with focus on employability and create an aspirational value for skill development training.
- This centre will deliver skills development courses in five job roles like organic grower, plumber, sewing machine operator, and home health aide and electrician domestic solutions. It aims to train 1000 candidates annually.

4. Government of India-United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) 2018-2022

(Topic: Environmental governance, General studies-III)

Context:

- ▶ NITI Aayog and United Nations in India signed the Sustainable Development Framework for 2018-2022. The agreement is a reflection of the commitment and efforts made by India towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

About the agreement:

- ▶ Partnership instruments such as the UNSDF assume significance to accelerate the pace towards building a New India by 2022, an India that is free of poverty and equal for all.
- ▶ The UN will support the Government of India on south-south cooperation, in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs. The total planned budget outlay for the implementation of the UNSDF 2018-2022 is approximately INR 11000 crore, of which 47 percent is planned to be mobilized through the course of implementation from multiple sources, including the private sector and the government.
- ▶ The UNSDF also includes a set of UN flagship programs that are aligned with major government schemes. The flagship programs will be scalable innovative, multi-sectoral solutions to some of the most pressing development challenges that India faces, while also serving as catalysts for increased investment of development finance.
- ▶ The programmes range from affordable housing for the poor to increasing access to clean energy in rural off-grid areas; from protecting all children from vaccine-preventable diseases to quality education for all children and skilling for young people, especially young girls; and from ending stunting to improving the child sex ratio.

The seven priority areas outlined in the UNSDF are:

- ▶ Poverty and Urbanization
- ▶ Health, Water, and Sanitation
- ▶ Education and Employability
- ▶ Nutrition and Food Security
- ▶ Climate Change, Clean Energy, and Disaster Resilience
- ▶ Skilling, Entrepreneurship, and Job Creation
- ▶ Gender Equality and Youth Development

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) :

These are a collection of 17 global goals set by the United Nations General Assembly. The SDGs are part of Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." That has been shortened to "2030 Agenda."

The goals are broad and interdependent, yet each has a separate list of targets to achieve. Achieving all 169 targets would signal accomplishing all 17 goals. The SDGs cover social and economic development issues including poverty, hunger, health, education, global warming, gender equality, water, sanitation, energy, urbanization, environment and social justice.

The SDGs were developed to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ended in 2015.

5. High Level Committee Constituted on Corporate Social Responsibility

(Topic: Corporate Social Responsibility, General studies-III)

Context:

- ▶ A High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility – 2018 (HLC-2018) has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri. Injeti Srinivas, Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to review the existing framework and guide and formulate the roadmap for a coherent policy on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Scope of HLC-2018:

- To review existing CSR framework as per Act, Rules and Circulars issued from time to time.
 - To recommend guidelines for enforcement of CSR provisions.
 - To suggest measures for adequate monitoring and evaluation of CSR by companies.
 - To examine and recommend audit (financial, performance, social) for CSR, as well as, analyze outcomes of CSR activities/programmes/projects.
 - Any other matter incidental or connected thereto.
- ▶ It will analyze outcomes of CSR activities, programmes, projects and suggest measures for effective monitoring and evaluation of CSR by companies. Suggestions are also expected on innovative solutions, use of technology, platform to connect stakeholders, and social audit.
- ▶ The existing provisions of in Companies Act, 2013 with respect to CSR fully empower the Board of a Company to decide on their CSR Policy, approve projects and oversee implementation. Many suggestions with respect to CSR such as local preference, earmarking CSR spend for backward areas, contribution to national/state funds, notifying priority areas, monitoring compliance, supplementing / complimenting government programmes, etc. have been given from various stakeholders.
- ▶ The Ministry had earlier set up a High Level Committee on CSR in 2015 which made several recommendations, including review of CSR framework after three years which is over.

Corporate Social Responsibility

- ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is referred as a corporate initiative to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on the environment and impact on social welfare and to promote positive social and environmental change. Its efforts that go beyond what may be required by regulators.
- ▶ The income is earned only from the society and therefore it should be given back.
- ▶ Under Companies Act, 2013 any company with a
 - net worth of the company to be Rs 500 crore or more or
 - turnover of the company to be Rs 1000 crore or more or
 - Net profit of the company to be Rs 5 crore or more.
- ▶ The Company has to spend at least 2% of last 3 years average net profits on CSR activities as specified in Schedule VII and as amended from time to time. The rules came into effect from 1 April 2014.

(Practice question)

- **Consider the following statements regarding ' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):**
 1. CSR is an initiative to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on the environment and impact on social welfare and to promote positive social and environmental change.
 2. Under it, the Company has to spend at least 3% of last 4 years average net profits on CSR activities.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

- ▶ **Correct statement: (a)**

Explanation:

About the Corporate Social Responsibility:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is referred as a corporate initiative to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on the environment and impact on social welfare and to promote positive social and environmental change. Its efforts that go beyond what may be required by regulators.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Company has to spend at least 2% of last 3 years average net profits on CSR activities as specified in Schedule VII and as amended from time to time. The rules came into effect from 1 April 2014.
- The existing provisions of in Companies Act, 2013 with respect to CSR fully empower the Board of a Company to decide on their CSR Policy, approve projects and oversee implementation.

6. SATAT initiative launched to promote Compressed Bio-Gas as an alternative, green transport fuel

(Topic: Energy resources, General studies-III)

Context:

- ▶ Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas launched an innovative initiative to promote Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) as an alternative, green transport fuel. The initiative named Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) is a developmental effort that would benefit vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.

Benefits of this initiative:

- ▶ This significant move has the potential to boost availability of more affordable transport fuels, better use of agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal solid waste, as well as to provide an additional revenue source to farmers.
- ▶ It will pave the way for an efficient municipal solid waste management and help in tackling problem of polluted urban air due to farm stubble-burning and carbon emissions.
- ▶ It will boost the entrepreneurship, rural economy and employment and provide additional source of revenue to farmers.
- ▶ It will also help achieve nation's climate change goals and bring down dependency on natural gas and crude oil imports and act as a buffer against crude oil and gas price fluctuations.
- ▶ It will also help to integrate CBG networks with city gas distribution (CGD) networks to boost supplies to domestic and retail users in existing and upcoming markets.
- ▶ Besides the potential to boost availability of more affordable transport fuels, better use of agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal solid waste, the CBG plants will provide an additional revenue source to farmers, and 75,000 direct job opportunities and lakhs of indirect jobs.

Background:

- ▶ Bio-gas is produced naturally through a process of anaerobic decomposition from waste / bio-mass sources like agriculture residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal solid waste, sewage treatment plant waste, etc. After purification, it is compressed and called CBG, which has pure methane content of over 95%.
- ▶ Compressed Bio-Gas is exactly similar to the commercially available natural gas in its composition and energy potential. With calorific value (~52,000 KJ/kg) and other properties similar to CNG, Compressed Bio-Gas can be used as an alternative, renewable automotive fuel. Given the abundance of biomass in the country, Compressed Bio-Gas has the potential to replace CNG in automotive, industrial and commercial uses in the coming years.

(Practice question)

- **Consider the following statements regarding ' Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG)' :**
 1. After purification bio-gas is compressed and called CBG, which has pure ethane content of over 95%.
 2. Compressed Bio-Gas is exactly similar to the commercially available natural gas in its composition and energy potential.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

► **Correct statement: (b)**

Explanation:

About the Compressed Bio-Gas:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Bio-gas is produced naturally through a process of anaerobic decomposition from waste / bio-mass sources like agriculture residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal solid waste, sewage treatment plant waste, etc. After purification, it is compressed and called CBG, which has pure methane content of over 95%.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Compressed Bio-Gas is exactly similar to the commercially available natural gas in its composition and energy potential. With calorific value (~52,000 KJ/kg) and other properties similar to CNG, Compressed Bio-Gas can be used as an alternative, renewable automotive fuel. Given the abundance of biomass in the country, Compressed Bio-Gas has the potential to replace CNG in automotive, industrial and commercial uses in the coming years